

## I INVITE YOU!

BY REV. J. C. RYLE.

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IF you really want to be saved, I give you an invitation this day. If you want to have peace with God now, and glory in heaven hereafter, I invite you to come to Christ at once, and both shall be your own.

I invite you boldly because of the words which Christ himself has spoken. He says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." (Matt. 11: 28. John 6: 37.) Reader, are you tired of your sins? Are you laboring and heavy laden? *I invite you this day to come to Christ, and you shall be saved!*

I know not who you are, or what you have been in time past, but I say boldly, Come to Christ by faith, and you shall have a pardon. High or low, rich or poor, young man or maiden, old man or child—you can not be worse than Manasseh and Paul before conversion—than David and Peter after conversion—come to Christ, and you shall be freely forgiven.

Think not for a moment that you have some great thing to do before you come to Christ. Such a notion is of the earth, earthy; the Gospel bids you come *just as you are*. Man's idea is to make his peace with God by repentance, and then come to Christ *at last*: the Gospel way is to receive peace from Christ *first of all*, and begin with him. Man's idea is to amend, and turn over a new leaf, and so work his way up to reconciliation and

friendship with God : the Gospel way is first to be friends with God through Christ, and then to work. Man's idea is to toil up the hill, and find life at the top : the Gospel way is first to live by faith in Christ, and then to do his will.

And judge ye, every one, judge ye which is true Christianity? Which is the good news? Which is the glad tidings? First the fruits of the Spirit and then peace, or first peace and then the fruits of the Spirit? First sanctification and then pardon, or first pardon and then sanctification? First service and then life, or first life and then service? Reader, your own heart can well supply the answer.

Come, then, willing to *receive*, and not thinking how much you can *bring*. Come willing to take what Christ offers, and not fancying you can give anything in return. Come with your sins, and no other qualification but a hearty desire for pardon, and so sure as the Bible is true you shall be saved.

You may tell me you are not worthy, you are not good enough, you are not elect. I answer, you are a sinner, and you want to be saved, and what more do you want? You are one of those whom Jesus came to save. Come to him, and you shall have life. Take with you words, and he will hear you graciously. Tell him all your soul's necessities, and I know he will give heed. Tell him you have heard he receiveth sinners, and that you are such. Tell him you have heard he has the keys of life in his hand, and entreat him to let you in. Tell him you come in dependence on his own promises, and ask him to fulfill his word, and do as

he has said. Do this in simplicity and sincerity, and, my soul for yours, you shall not ask in vain. Do this, and you shall find him faithful and just to forgive your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

Reader, I am deeply anxious to bring you to the point of *actual application to Christ*. I see many who are conscious of sin, and want to be saved, but never get beyond this. They hear of Christ with the ear, and believe all they are told about him. They allow that there is no salvation except in Christ. They acknowledge that Jesus alone can deliver them from hell, and present them faultless before God.

But they seem *never to get beyond this general acknowledgment*. They never fairly lay hold on Christ for their own souls. They stick fast in a state of wishing, and wanting, and feeling, and intending, and never get any further. They see what we mean. They know it is all true. They hope one day to get the full benefit of it. But at present they get no benefit at all.

Reader, if you are a man of this kind, I warn you plainly, you are in a bad state of soul. You are as truly in the way to hell in your present condition, as Judas Iscariot, or Ahab, or Cain. Believe me, there must be actual faith in Christ, or else Christ died in vain, so far as you are concerned. It is not looking at the bread that feeds the hungry man, but the actual eating of it. It is not gazing on the life-boat that saves the shipwrecked sailor, but actual getting into it. It is not knowing and believing that Christ is a Saviour that will save

your soul, unless there are *actual transactions between you and Christ.*

Take the advice I give you this day, and act upon it at once. Stand still no longer, waiting for some imaginary frames and feelings which will never come. Hesitate no longer, under the idea that you must first of all obtain the Spirit, and then come to Christ. *Arise and come to Christ just as you are.* He waits for you, and is as willing to save as he is mighty. He is the appointed physician for sin-sick souls. Deal with him as you would with your doctor, about the cure of a disease of your body. Make a direct application to him, and tell him all your wants. Tell him you want to be saved, and ask him to save you. Rest not till you have actually tasted for yourself that the Lord is gracious. Cast yourself wholly and unreservedly on Christ, and your soul shall be saved.

Reader, once more *I invite you.* The Lord grant the invitation may not be given in vain !

The Spirit, in our hearts,  
Is whisp'ring, "Sinner, come ;"  
The bride, the Church of Christ, proclaims  
To all his children, "Come !"

Let him that heareth say  
To all about him, "Come ;"  
Let him that thirsts for righteousness  
To Christ, the fountain, come !

Yes, whosoever will,  
Oh, let him freely come,  
And freely drink the stream of life ;  
'Tis Jesus bids him come.

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